

## **LEARNING FROM TEACHER EDUCATORS: REFLECTING ON THE CERTAINTY OF TEACHING 'RECIPES'**

**Stephen J Hall**  
Sunway University

### **ABSTRACT**

Change towards an interactive classroom is often blocked by lack of acceptance of new techniques which require changes in a teachers' role away from step-by-step sequences or 'recipes'. Such 'recipes' while useful for novice teachers may not work in all contexts. This paper describes how culturally based perceptions of a teacher's role impact on acceptance of classroom innovation and suggests teacher reflective practice. Building acceptance of differing methodologies in the early phases when first impressions count is therefore linked to reflection and lessons from in service teacher education. This paper uses rural in-service doctoral data and links research findings to classroom practice, focused on developing cross cultural acceptance of change. Techniques are suggested for bridging cultural gaps with reflective tools. These techniques drawn for research are presented by examining the roles we play as either teachers or teacher educators who wish to 'cook up' learning in interactive classrooms.

**Keywords:** classroom interaction, in-service teacher education, teacher reflection

### **Introduction**

Change towards an interactive classroom is often blocked by inactivity and lack of acceptance of new techniques which require changes in a teachers' role. This is evident in settings where teaching is often presented as step-by-step sequences or 'recipes' enshrined in the show and tell of the lesson plan. Such structures, while useful for novice teachers may not work in all contexts. This paper describes how culturally based perceptions of a teacher's role impact on acceptance of classroom innovation and suggests teacher reflective practice for all to work on our changes. The question addressed is how one builds acceptance of differing methodologies which aim to create interactivity in the early phases when first impressions count.

This paper uses rural in-service doctoral data and links research findings to practical classroom needs focused on developing cross cultural acceptance of change. To understand a teacher or teacher educator's techniques which either foster or hinder acceptance of change requires observation, analysis and

reflection. Techniques are suggested for bridging cultural gaps with reflective tools in which we can reflect in practical ways so as to develop in a sustainable way. These techniques will be presented by examining the multiple roles we play as either teachers or teacher educators who wish to ‘cook up’ learning in interactive classrooms.

Deviations from the lesson plan or a well-known recipe with which we are familiar often require trust in oneself and acceptance of a role other than following set prescribed steps. As teachers we can learn from teacher educators and what they did in the early phase of in- service courses to gain acceptance to what was perceived as outside known and familiar sequences. When the teacher educators were developing interactive approaches they were initially seen as deviating from cultural norms, familiar patterns and expectations. In much the same way, a teacher may be seen as going off track if not following a prescribed step-by-step approach. A range of techniques can however build acceptance of moving away from expected approaches through building credence in classroom interaction so that exploration is as accepted as didacticism. The techniques described here were also the basis for reflection. It is hoped that this paper will encourage reflection to “engage teachers self-examination and enhance ...understanding of teaching and learning in ways that are fresh, stimulating and challenging” (Kabilan, 2007, p.684).A reflective approach to both teacher and learner interaction may help build awareness of how to explore outside known teaching sequences or ‘recipes’.

## **Drawing from Data**

A qualitative study of four native English-speaking teacher educators from four differing nationalities and diverse settings will be drawn upon to illustrate how experienced teacher educators used techniques to gain acceptance for novel techniques when beginning rural Malaysian in-service courses. As will be seen, rural teachers faced differing approaches in which teacher educators deconstructed some expectations, and as such worked with new ‘recipes’ for the ‘kitchen’ of learning in order to broaden teachers’ knowledge base and skill base (Malachi,2011). I will outline techniques used in the first hour of beginning in-service methodology courses which were used to develop greater acceptance of interactive approaches. There has been little work on describing the process of teacher education interaction when introducing in-service courses, and I suggest that this high stake situation may provide some lessons for other classroom interaction. Kabilan (2007) has however described Malaysian reflection on reflection for pre-service teacher education with many useful strategies. The writer found little research linking the interaction during the early phases of in-service teacher education with critically evaluating the acceptance of teacher

development courses in terms of how “human learning is emergent through social interactions” (Singh & Richards, 2006, p.151).

One may ask why focus on the early phases of interaction; but first impressions count and there is the practical concern that you want teachers to return to subsequent sessions. Hogg and Vaughan’s research (1998, 2011) points to people latching onto ones early impressions of others. They call the early impressions ‘central traits’ and found that these have a disproportionate influence on how people are perceived when compared to later impressions. Their work which has stood the tests of time within the social psychology field found evidence of the primacy effect. The researchers describe the primacy effect as an effect based on the order of presentation effect in which earlier presented information has a disproportionate influence on social perception. This study therefore looked at the first hour of interaction and found interesting techniques which teacher educators described as deconstructing perceptions of being the all-knowing transmitter of knowledge. This point will be elaborated on later in this paper with suggestions for classroom use.

The area of analysis was teacher educators’ discourse and behavioural strategies when introducing their first day of an in-service course. Analyzing the talk, with content analysis driven by data, was augmented by the researcher’s field notes which recorded the non-verbal behaviors. Teachers’ reactions to the native English speaking teacher educators were captured in two semi-structured interviews, one very soon after the early phases of the first course session and the other later in the six to eight week course. The teacher educator interviews were in three stages, immediately after the lesson, a later stage and then, with the data in hand, as a reflective practice interview from which this paper draws descriptions. This third teacher educator interview, a reflective practice interview used the transcripts of the early phases of the first lesson and the researcher’s field notes as the springboard for teacher educators’ reflections.

A reflective approach to teaching has gained wide acceptance in many English speaking countries (Wallace, 1991; Stanley, 1998). Schon (1983) describes a need for problem identification and problem solving through continuous reflection and professional inquiry into practices. To summarise core ideas, one can turn to Korthagen (1993) who found that reflection in education occurs when teachers put their own beliefs of teaching and learning through a process of critical analysis and take greater responsibility for their own actions. Here is a link to the reason for teacher development: teachers taking responsibility for classroom change and their practices or behaviours. Richards describes reflection as “ an activity or process in which experience is recalled, considered and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose” (1990, p.5). Reflective

frameworks have been advocated in language teacher education and for classroom teachers (Bailey, 2006; Farrell, 2004, 2007), but little work has been undertaken using detailed interactional data as the basis of reflection. The data described in this paper therefore provides a special link as interactional behavior and talk are reflected on and then this act of reflecting is reflected upon.

Transcription of the reflective practice interviews was selective with time frames used as descriptors, a necessity given the length of the interviews, one of which was nearly two hours in length. Selected segments included key words linked to the topic domains or responses which arose from discussing the transcripts and field notes or answers to direct questions on the topic domains. I then would go back from an initial content analysis to re-examine responses, and if necessary, recode the responses based on content analysis. In the transcripts, as quoted in this paper, stressed words are underlined to show emphasis which often signals importance. As we progressed through the transcript and the field notes simultaneously, the shared analysis arising from critical incidents (Singh & Richards, 2006) drove the discussion. By critical incidents I am referring to moments which caused the teacher educators, in the case of this study, to pause and reflect or comment on an event or utterance which they perceived as important or unusual for teaching and learning. Such incidents occur in most classrooms when a learner response can lead us off the lesson plan but perhaps, if well managed, can develop into a learning opportunity. The foci of the teacher educator reflective interviews were such incidents, linked to how the course begun, ways of building acceptance for new 'recipes' and the teacher educators' own reflections. The length and depth of discussion varied with two teacher educators talking for over an hour about the transcript and the field notes.

I will describe five approaches derived from the data, and use reflective quotes to show how teacher educators approached deconstructing the accepted role of the teacher. These approaches are introducing oneself, task organization, the use of humour and non-verbals, and reflecting on one's teaching. These aspects were also reported as gaining teacher acceptance of novel approaches. We turn firstly to introducing oneself and the importance of the early phases of interaction.

### **How Teacher Educators Introduce Themselves to Foster Interaction**

Introducing oneself is a basic communicative function, yet it is an under researched area in teacher development and specifically in the contexts of in-service training. I would like to reference this point but was unable to find any teacher education studies which specifically focus on this area. In the Malaysian context, teacher educators regarded foregrounding one's personal and professional details as an important strategy with which to begin a course. In the reflective practice interview, I pointed out to Teacher Educator A what he had

said in the first interview. He formerly did not use the foregrounding of his biodata, but he had in fact started the course, which I observed, by talking about himself. His biodata presentation was the earliest sequence of his course start-up. He replied that “they are so interested in where you come from and that kind of thing. They do not want you to just throw a name and your qualification...they like to see a background to a person” (Teacher Educator A, Reflective Practice 2, 10 mins). Teacher Educator A noted that he always starts by talking about himself, based on how well it has been received in his previous two years in another district.

At Site 4, Teacher Educator D said that “I always do the biodata” (Teacher Educator D, Reflective Practice 1, 53 mins). This adaptation to introducing oneself was reported by all the educators including Teacher Educator B, who spoke at length of her learning experience when first arriving in Malaysia two and half years before the research interview. Previously, she would ask teachers to interview each other about their names, schools and impressions of the UPSR (*Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah*) and the best way to prepare for it. The UPSR is the national primary school exit examination, and she found that discussion of this important examination would create a complaint sharing session, so that the peer interviews would start to “generate a lot of negativity within the early phases of a course” (Teacher Educator B, Reflective Practice, 3 mins). She no longer begins a course by asking teachers for their opinions, but “give(s) a fairly brief introduction, my name, how many years I’ve been in Malaysia” (Teacher Educator B, Reflective Practice 3, 30 mins). At Site 3, the course began with a quiz based on Teacher Educator C’s biodata. The teacher educator described his sociology background to me in the interview noting that the technique of using a quiz about the presenter responds to teachers’ interest in “personal details and the function that food plays in common ground.” (Teacher Educator C, Reflective Practice Line 118-120). He made the analogy of how Canadian speakers visiting outside their area would strive for a shared background by commenting on the local ice hockey team and its position in the league as a form of social convergence (Berns, 1990). I now turn to how tasks were organized as information presentation through task organisation as an important part of interaction in which participants may converge in shared understanding or diverge in possibilities of misunderstanding.

### ***Moving Rapidly into Tasks***

How we organise learning and provide tasks which engage learners is central to departures from the safety of lesson plans. This section will therefore focus on task organisation and how effective teacher educators organised their tasks to encourage learning which was experiential. In fact when teacher educators reflected on the lesson, the main focus is on what they and participants had done

in the classroom, rather than what is said. Most of the reflective practice interview involved discussion about teacher education methodology, with the exception of Teacher Educator C whose discussion of practice was more centred on bridging cultural difference. His introductory task of a personal detail quiz was the most lengthy of the initial tasks which I observed. Most discussion in the other interviews centred on the task types chosen for the course, for example, the chain story, peer dictation, identifying settings for text, simple chants or pair work dialogues. Yet for all the differences in content, there were commonly agreed strategies which were both modelled and commented on explicitly. I shall now describe these, with select quotes linked to field notes and reflections.

All teacher educators moved rapidly into tasks which required teachers to interact with either the teacher educator or most frequently with each other. Deviating from previously known approaches was therefore based on providing productive use of the language in tasks which could be readily perceived as relevant to everyday classroom needs. By choosing productive tasks, the teacher educators were moving away from the model of teaching as transmission of information. In other words to gain acceptance of new methodology and to depart from the usual, they provided involvement through experiential learning. When the teacher educators were asked if this transition after their initial biodata introduction into peer interaction was in response to Project frameworks aimed for experiential learning and loop input (Woodward, 2003), all said that it was because the activity-based approach worked, and teachers responded positively to it. This is an important point as one of the difficulties in teacher education is matching teacher educators' perception of what was successful with what was workable, accepted and useful for classrooms. The teacher educators' rationale was that positive response could be measured through continued attendance, the teachers' responses to activities, their use of techniques and lastly, teachers' feedback which was often given informally one to one. The latter is especially difficult to verify. All teacher educators stated however that the early phase of the course should focus on pair or group interaction; for example, "You want to get them working right away. They have been working all morning. You get them into lively action as soon as you can" (Teacher Educator A, Reflective Practice 28, 2 mins). Teachers also responded that this was a working framework that enabled them to try out new techniques. By extrapolation I suggest that this could also be a useful rationale for deviating from the norm of the planned lesson; if interest is aroused in a particular language area, provide a short relevant task.

The importance of pacing was commented on by three of the four teacher educators with all describing the importance of rapid tasks where success is evident. During my observation at Site 4 it was evident that within three

utterances (Hall, 1991), the teacher educator had an interactive task organised and the whole class was active. He replied, “I do it and then get them to look at what we have done” (Teacher Educator D, Reflective Practice 8, 28 mins). This approach is shared by all who prioritize the experience of tasks within the first ten minutes. Teacher Educator D put this succinctly after describing his primary teacher training, commenting that “It’s far better to get them to do something. Don’t explain. Show” (Teacher Educator C, Reflective Practice, 9 mins). Teacher Educator B noted that she moves rapidly through examples, yet always gives more than one example to reinforce a learning point. Linked to rapidly providing for success in productive language use is modelling a range of questions.

### *Using a Variety of Questions*

The use of questions has been a perennial occupation of education, and it is core to building curiosity in learning (Dillion, 1990). However developing acceptance of questioning in the cultural setting where authority is rarely questioned can have its challenges. Acceptance of deviating from the lesson norm also requires accepting that learners’ questions have a valid role in interaction, and that teachers are also questioners who do not know all the answers. Teacher educators worked with this dynamic. For example, when Teacher Educator A introduced a new technique 30 minutes into the lesson, he acknowledged that modelling and raising teachers’ awareness of question types is central to bringing in new pedagogy. He described conscious tactics “of instead of saying what something is, you question about it, to keep them interested” (Teacher Educator A, Reflective Practice 22, 50 mins). When working with the most articulate group with the most complex content, Teacher Educator B described her questioning tactics as follows, “I would do a lot of fill in the pause. One of my underlying philosophies is that students should think as much as possible. Instead of providing conclusions, I want you to come to it yourself” (Teacher Educator B, Reflective Practice 14, 4 mins). However, direct questioning was equally important for her. She stated this directly as a pedagogic principle which she would tell teachers: “I always ask lots of how and why questions. It’s not just making questions. I want them to think about why they make conclusions. So some of my students get very annoyed. They say, oh...its your favourite question ...again. “Why?” I say it’s the most important question there is. Why?” (Teacher Educator B, Reflective Practice 15, 39 mins).

Two of the four Teacher Educators linked questions to ‘wait time’ (Rowe, 2003). At Site 4, the teacher educator with extensive European experience observed that reading the transcript which includes annotated gaps of more than 5 seconds made him aware of his approach to wait time. He looked at the examples in detail and said he could increase his ‘wait time’ or pausing after asking a question. I discussed with him how he usually waits for three seconds and once

had waited for 7 seconds. He replied that “There’s British pressure to make conversation.” Then after talking through two examples he continued that this is “Not like the Finns or French. I think if I don’t get feedback, I jump in probably sooner than I should” (Teacher Educator D, Reflective Practice 21, 40 mins). Shortly after this discussion, he reflected that “I think the answer is to wait longer” (Teacher Educator D, Reflective Practice 23, 33 mins) as did Teacher Educator B when the wait time aspect was discussed with her. The most detailed exploration of the importance of waiting for teachers to answer questions was articulated by Teacher Educator B:

58 (I) Shall we come back to the transcript. The pace is quite slow perhaps  
 59 teachers can’t get anything wrong in the first set of activities, I  
 60 think. Is that fair comment?  
 61 (T) Right. When I ask a question, I count in my head. It something  
 I’ve  
 62 learnt works It’s a technique I use. 1000, 2000, 3000==  
 63 (I) ==For how many?  
 64 (T) That depends on the question. What informs the pauses is my  
 65 experience. Some when I was watching, watching other DELCs. You  
 66 remember when we went for the training with \_\_\_\_ It was wayway too  
 67 fast. It takes a longer time than that. As teachers it was a different  
 68 experience from being the trainer up front  
 (Teacher Educator B, Reflective Practice I, 58-70)

Teacher educators therefore consciously worked with increasing wait time allowing for thinking in the second language to occur, modelling a technique which may also be infrequently used in classrooms. Acceptance of positive responses may also relate to teacher educator uses of positive reinforcement which were evident in their discourse strategies.

### ***Accentuating Positive Reinforcement***

A prominent feature of teacher educators’ talk was the frequent use of positive reinforcement with specific points being praised, rather than generalised praise. When reflecting and using the acronym PR for positive reinforcement, Teacher Educator A expressed opinions about the local learning culture and positive reinforcement as follows:

The PR is to encourage them. With one of the teachers we had a discussion and she said “oh, oh, you keep on saying ‘Good’. Is it cos they are getting it right? I said well, I know that in Malaysia there are people who won’t compliment students... and if they are exceptional they will get oh quite good... if it’s exceptional. They are not into



commending and praising, as the student has to do a lot to get praise. I have a different attitude. I say when you succeed in one area, good, onto the next. So they find it's interesting. Do it your own way. I tell them do it your own way. Ah. The students always know from your demeanour.  
(Teacher Educator A, Reflective Practice, 14 mins)

He expressed the view that “You know, Malaysians don't compliment, until late in the day” (Teacher Educator A, Reflective Practice 16, 20 mins). For these teacher educators there is awareness that the frequent use of positive reinforcement was very different from the Malaysian culture of learning. There is validity to the comments from a multilingual point of view as both Teacher Educator A and Teacher Educator D have a good working knowledge of Malay and long-term experience with Malaysia, while Teacher Educator A fluently and consciously used Malay and humour to position himself as not being an outsider (Davies, 2003). The use of mother tongue for social convergence was an evident strategy but outside the scope of this paper. Linked to social positioning was the culturally loaded area of humour which surprisingly was a common technique to build acceptance of the novel tasks being presented.

### ***Deconstructing the Perceived Expert Role through Humour***

The teacher educators' uses of humour were not anticipated when initially analysing teacher and teacher educator interaction in the in-service teacher education project. Yet there were numerous instances of humour, often self-deprecatory. In the teacher interviews, there were also references to the use of humour from teachers and teacher educators with one teacher educator even described as Mr Bean. It is likely that this element, which I have rarely observed in other Malaysian teacher courses or workshops, helped contribute to the comments about friendliness and approachability. It is evident through both observation and reflection by the teacher educators that they perceived humour as a 'social levelling' tool.

Humour has only recently begun to receive attention in second language acquisition research, but work includes humour being used to negotiate identities, to subvert social norms or power structures, to mitigate face threatening acts (Holmes & Marra, 2002) and of course, to entertain (Holmes, 2000). The teacher educators then present themselves as an 'actor' who uses and accepts humour. Much of their humour is similar to workplace anecdotes. Holmes, 2006 describes such humour as a workplace socialising discourse when anecdotes have tellability, a concern with personal experience, are not a required accounting and are not ratified on task business talk. She observes that such digressions provide a means of creating professional identity. In the context of

NS-NNS interaction (native speaker/non-native speaker), Bell (2005, pp.192-193) lists a number of other functions of humour and language play. These functions include humour as a marker of being part of a group through insider references. Such identity aspects were recorded in the discourse of all the four teacher educators, as described below. The identity aspects and the use of humour to position the teacher educator as non-threatening are most central to gaining acceptance for departures from expected norms.

The teacher educators all stated that they consciously used humour as a means of deconstructing teacher reliance on the *Matsalleh* who may be viewed as an omniscient expert. One teacher educator said that although he is not basically a humourous person, he would use humour when “it flies by” (Teacher Educator A, Reflective Practice 4, 47 mins). While labelling herself as basically a serious person, Teacher Educator B noted that “I like to give off-the-wall examples. I would rather use, like, the cop and the robber, than Ali and Bill or (laughter) Dick and Jane. I like to get their attention with...you know, some strange people” (Teacher Educator B, Reflective Practice 3, 20 mins). However, this teacher educator consciously uses self- deprecatory humour saying that she would rather make jokes about herself than others: “I first started doing when I went overseas to counter the impression of the arrogant westerner who comes in from overseas” (Teacher Educator B, Reflective Practice, 20 mins).

When discussing the role of humour and cultural difference, one teacher educator drew my attention to the limitations of a simple division of Asian and European differences. She spoke of her experience in Japan, and then described how much of the deconstruction of the “expert role” she wanted to ‘counter’, occurred in the more informal setting of the lengthy coffee breaks which occur at all Malaysian events. This, to her, was a contributing factor in the ‘culture’ of teacher education courses:

T: While we are talking about culture. There’s one thing in the *rojak* of Malaysian culture which is good as a whole. That’s shooting the shit over tea. It’s easy to build a group dynamic here because of that local culture, compared to Japan say. It’s easy to build a group dynamic because of that local culture.

I: Are you talking about the tea break in between==

T: ==No. I’m speaking in a more general way. For a lot of Malaysians they ..ah... Malaysians are very comfortable starting off with small talk and then they start building friendliness. It all happens very quickly. In other countries, I’ve been in it..takes a long time to bridge distance between strangers and acquaintances....and the whole Malaysian thing of sitting around for a long time and having these tea breaks (laughter)

(Teacher Educator B, Reflective Practice 27, 29 mins)

These dynamics were also mentioned by Teacher Educator D. This building of rapport during course interludes is outside the focus of this paper. I suggest however, that how rapport is build and how teacher educators present themselves is worthy of further research for international teacher education contexts. Clearly the words and task management during classroom interaction are linked to a range of non-verbals which I shall now describe.

### ***Building Acceptance through Non-verbals***

When one compares differing cultures, non-verbals often play a role (Hall, 2003), and many educationalists have acknowledged the importance of where one stands in a classroom, and how one moves around. Physical positioning is especially important if one is a tall adult working with those of less imposing physical presence, or a person seen as being more powerful. I recall considerable importance being put on this aspect of classroom management during my New Zealand primary teacher training in the late 1970s. Proxemics or closeness during talk is also a well-researched area where cultural groups differ (Moran, 2001). Linked to the use of space is the use of gesture (McNeill, 1992). The field notes captured these aspects in order to contribute to the reflective practice discussion and created a holistic record of interaction to contribute to the final teacher educator conversation.

All the teacher educators moved around the classroom with the rationale being expressed by one as follows, “You’ve got to move around to engage them all, hence the movement in and out and around. It also keeps them awake. It’s a good thing to do” (Teacher Educator A , Reflective Practice 18, 10 mins). At times, discussion focused on particular movements which individuals had such as upwards eyebrow movements (Teacher Educator B and Teacher Educator D) or “Pumping the desk with my fist? Interesting. I do that?” (Teacher Educator A, Reflective Practice 25, 48 mins). A more noticeable and a more frequent aspect was moving to be close to groups and the level to which teacher educators would literally go down to when talking with teachers during group work. Teacher Educator D, who is a very tall man and primary trained discussed this at great length. He linked the notion of hierarchy with how he moves away from the front centre of a classroom and kneels down during group work. “Proximity is important. When you tell a story, they often say come and sit around for the story. Well, if people are close to you, they feel involved” (Teacher Educator D, Reflective Practice, 19 mins). He then discussed how with this primary teacher background, he was always advised and had always worked with going physically down to the level of the children, but finds that in Malaysia “there’s the hierarchical thing that gets in the way” (Teacher Educator D, Reflective

Practice, 21 mins). He continued that “it’s difficult to get over the expert role thing.” Commenting on the same topic later he said, “So there’s proxemics. Yes the proxemics to show we are equals.” (Teacher Educator D, Reflective Practice 21, 30 mins). This non-verbal aspect is therefore linked to techniques which the teacher educators see as changing perceptions of how teachers would see the teacher educators’ place in the hierarchy of the ‘small culture’ (Holliday, 1999) of learning and teaching

### ***Reflecting by Using the Reflective Practice Interview***

Teacher educators discussed the exploration of practice in a reflective conversation about the transcript and field notes. This opportunity to collegially reflect on practice is one which benefited the teacher educators and one which could be encouraged in other settings although it requires structured support (Akbari, 2007). Teacher Educator A found the process of reading and talking through the transcript and the field note “interesting” as “the language comes out at the moment” comparing teaching to his earlier career as a lawyer where “You know what your heads of argument are... but not all the language” (Teacher Educator A, Reflective Practice 39, 10 mins). He spoke of the reflection as being “very educational”. He stated that he would use awareness of “his movement around the classroom, the rhetorical questions and the clapping of the hands” in future teacher education sessions. The exploration of practice made him aware of these things which he had not considered for many years. He spoke of the feedback as being valuable, because it was from a “neutral observer.”

Some discourse features were discussed as a way of beginning the exploration of practice. I observed that Teacher Educator B’s content explanations were short and never more than three minutes in length, even though she was conducting a course on the complexities of form and function in grammar. She replied in a tone of surprise “Oh, I never thought so that. Oh, Ok. I like the activities to move along” (Teacher Educator B, Reflective Practice, 45 secs). I offered to play the audio to Teacher Educator C who did not want to do this as he said he found seeing himself in print quite revealing:

I have really enjoyed this discussion and benefited from this. To talk about what you’ve done is both revealing and exhilarating. Otherwise the only kind of reflection is the drive home. Then I tend to think rather negatively. To be asked guided questions on how it worked was really affirming.

(Teacher Educator C, Reflective Practice Line 131-138)

Teacher Educator D spoke of the whole process of reflecting on data as “encouraging” as “it’s nice to talk to someone who knows what I am talking

about. That's because it's what happens in the classroom that matters" (Teacher Educator D, Reflective Practice, I hour 55 mins).

## Conclusion

Teacher educators building acceptance in the early phases of in-service interaction led teachers to learn outside the norms and sequences of earlier experiences. In moving beyond the recipes of known sequences they used differing techniques. Introducing personal stories and a 'rounded' persona helped set up the role of the teacher as a facilitator, rather than an all knowing expert. Tasks were short and designed to engender a sense of success to foster positive reinforcement, an area often obscured by some educators who spend time on nit-picking details. Questioning was modelled so that the teacher was also seen as one who questioned and not only answered. Confidence in oneself is needed to be able to laugh at oneself while moving away from just being up front at the front of the classroom, but such confidence engenders acceptance of exploration. After all is said and done, taking time out to reflect and ask what worked and what was less accepted may be worthwhile reflection - before we cook up the next round in the bubbling cauldron of classroom interaction.

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